

E' a primary protective layer on said sidewalls of said flowable oxide insulator layer, said primary protective layer being a thin oxidized surface layer of said flowable oxide insulator material on said sidewalls within said trough, said thin surface layer preventing the exposure of said flowable oxide insulator layer to moisture and lithographic resist developers, said primary protective layer being substantially impervious to copper extrusion, and a secondary protective layer on said primary protective layer and on said substrate surface, said secondary protective layer being electrically conductive.

E2 38. (Amended) An integrated circuit including a layer of flowable oxide insulator of a flowable oxide material having a dielectric constant lower than SiO_2 , and a thin protective layer thereon, said thin protective layer being an oxidized surface layer of said flowable oxide insulator that is resistant to moisture and lithographic resist developers.

Please add the following new claims 49 - 52:

49. (New) The integrated circuit semiconductor device as recited in claim 27 wherein said primary protective layer is formed using an oxygen plasma.

E3 50. (New) The integrated circuit semiconductor device as recited in claim 27 wherein said primary protective layer has a thickness less than approximately 20% of a thickness of said flowable oxide insulator layer.

51. (New) The integrated circuit as recited in claim 38 wherein said primary protective layer is formed using an oxygen plasma.